Even Montaigne has been overdone; he is not always racy. I notice that he is never more so than when he gives himself full rein, never less so than when he behaves in a studied fashion. The so famous *Apology* of Raymond de Sebonde is almost devoid of amusing touches.[21] I was not able to finish reading it without a certain obstinacy; in my little six-volume edition it fills almost a whole volume and I, who always read Montaigne with a pencil in my hand ready to note in the margin my astonishment or my joy, I advanced here from page to page without finding a single living word, not one of those nonchalant and quivering sentences that abound among these abandoned pages. The desire to compose that chapter stood in his way.

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At times I deeply regret living in an epoch when respect is so rarely shown and so difficult. Not everyone can do without it with impunity. "My mind was naturally inclined toward veneration," Goethe (or at least his translator) says somewhere. If curvatures of the mind were as obvious as those of the spine, I know more than one that would not dare show itself in conversation, etc. . . .

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"What do you mean by manners?"

**I mean a general submission and conduct consistent with good or bad laws. If the laws are good, the manners are good," etc. . . . (Diderot: *Supplement au Voyage de Bougainville,* Part IV, p. 205, Centenary Edition.)[22]

"Manners are the hypocrisy of a nation." (Balzac.)

"If, as Buffon says, love lies in the sense of touch, the softness of that skin must have been active and penetrating like the scent of daturas." (Balzac: *Les Paysans.)* [23]

"It is certain that the Mohammedan peoples would have preceded it

in that path if, at the very beginning, the Koran had not protected Islam-

[21] The "Apology[3]* forms Chapter XII of Book II of the *Essays* and, as the center of the work in its first form, expresses Montaigne's skepticism at its height.

[22] Diderot was inspired to write in 1772 an argument of naturist philosophy (supporting Rousseau's theory that man is naturally good) by the account of Louis- Antoine de Bougainville's voyage to Oceania,

[28] *The Peasants.*